

Canadian

FILM

WEEKLY



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Why blame the Movies?

A great deal has been said and written about permissiveness and sex in modern day motion pictures. As a result, many people, both within and outside our business, may find themselves completely bewildered.

No one can argue against the fact that our society has almost completely cast aside the taboos of the Victorian era. Attitudes towards sex and the relationship between the sexes, particularly among young people, have changed radically and will continue to do so.

Some theatre owners and managers may have developed a feeling of guilt about the type of films they are presently showing. However, it may be that we have not paid enough attention to what other media are doing. For example, the stage has now reached the point of complete nudity, something burlesque would have shunned even in its heyday. Magazines and newspapers print material of a more daring nature than they used to. Some magazines use lurid headlines, involving sex, in order to sell more copies. But many newspapers report events, as they happen, in a matter of fact way.

For instance, in the April 27th issue of the staid and conservative *Globe & Mail* of Toronto, an article was published, along side a picture of three young children playing violins, headed — "Two U.S. Experts Devise Course in Sex Rehabilitation". It is a report of a book just published by Dr. William H. Masters and Virginia E. Johnson of the Reproductive Biology and Research Foundation of St. Louis, and describes matters of intimate sex in as matter-of-fact fashion as one might talk about diets or cooking.

This is not the first time we
(Continued on page 2)



AVCO EMBASSY POW-WOW — Joseph E. Levine, president of Avco Embassy Pictures Corp. Ltd., hosted an exhibitors' luncheon in Toronto recently to discuss his company's product lineup for 1970. Shown above, front row, left to right, are Robert Weston, vice-president and assistant to Joseph Levine and Levine. Back row, left to right, are D. J. Edell, vice-president and general sales manager of Avco Embassy, and Victor Beattie, Canadian general manager of 20th Century-Fox Corp. Ltd., distributors of Avco Embassy films in Canada.

Canada Week part of Cannes Festival

The Canadian Film Development Corporation will undertake a special promotional effort at the Cannes Film Festival from May 2-16.

The festival is the principal annual international film occasion and brings together film producers and distributors from all over the world.

Canadian producers and distributors will have an excellent opportunity not only to sell the films

they have already produced at the festival, but also to discuss their plans for future feature film projects with distributors from other countries.

With the cooperation of the federal department of industry, trade and commerce, the exhibitions commission and the National Film Board, the CFDC is establishing a closed-circuit television system at two central points of festival activities: Le Grand Palais and l'Hôtel Carlton. The system will be at the disposal of representatives of all the sectors of Canadian film activity.

MGM to move hdqs. from N.Y. to Calif.

The board of directors of MGM has approved the move of the company's world corporate headquarters from New York to the Culver City Studios in California. The board approval comes after the company undertook an extensive internal analysis of the effect of the move on its operations and operating expenses.

Relocation of corporate headquarters comes in accordance with James Aubrey's announcement at the January annual meeting of stockholders in New York, at which time he stated the move "will consolidate our overall operation, engender an effective relationship between production and distribution and should result in substantial additional economies."

The major part of the move is scheduled for mid-July, with certain individuals and departmental operations moving as early as June 1. MGM will retain space in its present building at 1350 Avenue of the Americas, New York, with approximately 90 employees remaining to carry out east coast divisional operations.

Meyer Chaplin, father of WB executive, dies

Meyer Chaplin, father of Chas. S. Chaplin, Warner Bros. vice-president in charge of Canadian television sales, passed away recently at the age of 96. Right up to the time of his decease, the senior Chaplin continued to be an energetic leader and spokesman for many charitable organizations in Toronto including the Home For The Aged and the Sons of Jacob Benevolent Society, of which he was the founder and many times president.

The late Mr. Chaplin, a resident of Toronto for 64 years, was a prominent member of the Canadian fur industry until his retirement 10 years ago. He was president of a number of service groups and honored on many occasions for his work in the community. At the time of his death, he was the oldest active member of the Shaar Shemoyim Synagogue in Toronto.

Director **Milos Forman** (*Loves Of A Blonde*) made *The Fireman's Ball*, a parody-fable of Slavic bureaucracy, and it was nominated as one of the best foreign films in the 1968 **Academy Awards** contest. By far one of the funniest motion pictures I have seen (others being the **Marx Brothers' A Night At The Opera** and **Jacques Tati's Playtime**, recently acquired by the **Walter Reade Organization** and **Continental Films**), it concerns a group of firemen who stage a ball in honour of their beloved, retiring captain — they plan to present him with a gold-plated fireman's hat-
chet. There is so much ridicule and absurdity in the movie — a house burns to the ground as the insufficient firemen throw futile handfuls of snow on it and move closer to the flames in order to keep themselves comfortably warm, a beauty contest turns into chaos when all of the contestants are 'losers', all the contest prizes are stolen — that the whole affair becomes not only a humorous allegory, but also a very successful comedy depicting the life styles of Eastern Europe and a multi-levelled comment on Czechoslovakian political history. It is unfortunate that *The Fireman's Ball* has not received the exhibition it fully deserves, as I am quite sure that there is a good-sized audience to support it. There is definitely a number of small cinemas dealing in the so-called 'art house' trade that would prosper by the screening of this clever little film. The *Fireman's Ball* is distributed in Canada by **Cine-Art** in **Montreal**. . . . **Abbie Hoffman** has announced that he and the other defendants in the **Chicago** conspiracy trial will attempt to offset their legal expenses by making their own feature film of the trial. He said that the movie will be entitled *The Seditious Movie* ("because we're not allowed to make seditious speeches"). It will star all seven defendants, their lawyers, and a number of 'sympathetic' celebrities. Hoffman revealed that he had sent a telegram to **Judge Julius Hoffman** offering the judge \$100,000 to play himself in the film. The *Seditious Seven* will be directed by **Nicholas Ray** (*Rebel Without A Cause*) and will be filmed this spring in **New York** on a studio set that will be an exact replica of the **Chicago** courtroom where the actual trial took place. . . . **Vilgot Sjoman's I Am Curious, Blue** has been cleared by the **Quebec** censor board and **Montreal** is consequently enjoying the North American premiere engagement of the second part of this celebrated Swedish film. As no one here has seen the film, the only way to inform interested parties on its content/quality is to

view from the topp

By GARY TOPP

quote from the only reports available — those from two Montreal newspapers. From the **Montreal Star**, "Blue has fewer and less explicit sex scenes than its predecessor, yet, paradoxically, it is more concerned with sex. Like *Yellow*, it uses a combination of fact, fiction, satire and fantasy, in styles borrowed largely from French practitioners of the cinema verité technique, to define and criticize the quality of life in contemporary Sweden. Sjoman once again sends his kooky, disorganized, opinionated and somewhat porky heroine, *Lena*, into the streets of Stockholm to gather opinions on politics, religion and sex. Blue is not the 'son' of *I Am Curious* and it is not, as some people might imagine, composed of footage left over when the first film was finished." The **Gazette** described *I Am Curious, Blue* as a "pleasant surprise. Sjoman's purpose here is clearly to prod his countrymen into life, as he seems to believe Sweden is suffocating in smug self-satisfaction. And he does it gently, by showing his audience what they look like en repose, on the job, in the streets, anywhere at all. Using the same cast, Sjoman brightens their outlooks and openly mocks the seriousness of their earlier roles. The story slides from script to documentary, to fantasy without a hitch, painlessly shifting the viewer's point of view, making *I Am Curious, Blue* an amusing, intelligent cinematic exercise. P.S.: For those seeking skin and sex, you'll find them — but in small, discreet doses only." The distributor is unknown. . . . Overheard at a recent screening — "Let's see it through once more and then ban it." . . . Film-sellers tend to dislike or distrust a product until the audience gives its approval (in cash). Lack of immediate 'box-office' seldom killed a good film, but sometimes it has killed a good

director. . . . As the cinema's greatest audience is those between 16 and 25, the cinema should consequently be one of the greatest inspirers of the coming generation. The cinema, therefore, has the gravest responsibility as to the way it 'inspires' this generation. I doubt that there could ever be enough films dealing with their problems, but these problems, which are indeed extremely vital, should not be boiled down to the sexy, violent side of things. They should not be boiled down for the sake of box-office alone. There is no end to what films could do — or be. Films could help people listen in a new way to all the new things happening; to all the old things still not dead. Films could help us open our eyes a little more, so that we could see better and hear better our neighbors in the next house or our neighbors in the country nearby or far away. Films could help us more in the search for knowledge about ourselves. Films could be more concerned about how to explore the world than how to explode it. There is definitely no end to what films could do — or be. That's what makes the film business so discouraging and yet, so very encouraging. . . . I find it quite sick that certain people try to exploit an individual's death — a recent example being the revival of *Gypsy* and the name of the late *Gypsy Rose Lee* appearing in the catch-line of the newspaper ads. . . . "The old-fashioned censor board, which viewed films prior to exhibition and decided whether they could be shown, is, for all practical purposes, dead," Miss **Barbara Scott**, deputy attorney in charge of censorship matters for the **Motion Picture Association of America**, told more than 200 lawyers at a dinner meeting of the **Los Angeles Copyright Society**.

everything which may appear on our screens, neither should we adopt a Victorian or Pollyanna attitude.

It follows, therefore, that we should not permit ourselves to become scapegoats for narrow-minded people who choose to walk through life with blinkers. Life entails living and the way it is lived today is different from last year or the year before. Our business is to sell motion picture entertainment and to cater to that segment of the public which will buy it. We need make no apologies.

Our Business

(Continued from Page 1)

have seen articles of this type appear in newspapers, some of which attempt from time to time to censor our advertising. This is not written in censure of such newspapers, because their purpose is to accurately report what is happening in the world today.

Motion pictures have always been a reflection of life, and while we do not necessarily condone

Looking Ahead

Judy Geeson has been signed for a starring role in **10 Rillington Place**, the Filmways production for **Columbia Pictures** starring **Richard Attenborough**.

Based on the book by **Ludovic Kennedy**, "10 Rillington Place" will be directed by **Richard Fleischer**. **Leslie Linder** and **Basil Appleby** will produce the story of mass murderer **John Christie**.

Miss Geeson will play the wife of **Timothy Evans**, the man who was wrongly convicted and executed for the murders committed by **Christie**.

* * *

The Priest's Wife, starring **Sophia Loren** and **Marcello Mastroianni**, has gone into production for **Warner Bros.** release on location in **Padua, Italy**, a town associated with the birth of the Renaissance.

The **Champion Film**, produced by **Carlo Ponti**, comes to grips with a crucial Church problem of today: should priests be allowed to marry?

The Priest's Wife, a story of a modern rock singer and a priest who fall in love, dramatizes the Church's conflict, "in a sensitive, humanistic way," according to producer **Ponti**.

* * *

The Newcomers, the **Walt Disney** feature shot in **Jackson Hole, Wyoming**, will be released as **The Wild Country**. **Steve Forrest**, **Vera Miles**, **Jack Elam** and **Ronny Howard** star in the **Buena Vista** release directed by **Robert Totten**.

* * *

Silvana Mangano has been signed to appear with **Dirk Bogarde** and 14-year-old **Bjorn Andresen** in **Death in Venice**, **Luchino Visconti's** motion picture production for **Warner Bros.**

Miss Mangano, wife of film producer **Dino di Laurentiis** will portray the mother of young **Andresen**.



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IT'S MY BAG

By Ed Hocura

As far as the **Motion Picture Institute** and **Astral Films** are concerned, there are other ways to publicize movies without relying on hefty newspaper expenditures to sell them. The former realized ten-fold what it spent to have a booth at last week's Canadian Marketing Show; the latter realized extensive news coverage for its preview screening of **Wedding Night** at the Ontario Science Centre. **Alex Stewart**, of the **Motion Picture Institute**, and **Bill Morland**, of **Astral Films**, can take satisfaction in knowing that their efforts were not in vain. In Stewart's



case, he spent most of three days at the Canadian Marketing Show talking to fellow exhibitors and visitors about movies. The fact that the **MPI** booth was handing out free popcorn, theatre passes and sound track albums was incidental to the interest shown by major companies in considering tie-in promotions with film distributors. And just around the corner from the **MPI** booth was a theatre that Stewart took advantage of with an assortment of trailers he had put together into a novel package. All in all, the **MPI** booth benefited from a steady flow of people who stopped by to see what was happening in the film industry. With the co-operation of radio station **CKEY**, **Astral Films** was able to attract a cross-section of Torontonians to see an advanced screening of **Wedding Night**. Following the screening a panel discussion was held, and while it didn't attain the results expected it did allow the panelists and members of the audience to get into a fairly lively battle of words on pornography and censorship. **Martin Bockner**, general manager of **Astral Films**, and **Don Watts**, director of publicity for **Century Theatres Management Ltd.**, managed to keep their cool in view of some absurd questions tossed at them. Artist **Harold Town**, Toronto Telegram writer **Dubarry Campeau** and a lawyer were the other panel members. The one big fault to be found with the panel discussion was that at the time when it showed signs of developing into something substantial, it was ended. It's possible that **Astral Films** may have picked up some good word-of-mouth publicity for **Wedding Night**, so what the panel discussion failed to produce the film managed on its own. So **Bill Morland** and **Martin Bockner** deserve full marks for providing the kind of film that other cities could consider in arranging a tie-up with a radio station to have a similar panel discussion. The fact that the **CKEY-Astral** movie night posed the question "Do movies reflect our society of today?" made it something worth trying. That it didn't achieve what it might have was more the fault of the panel moderator than it was the panel members. **Don Watts** and **Martin Bockner** were ready to defend the movie industry, but some of the questions they were asked gave them little chance to get into the nitty-gritty of the problems facing exhibitors and distributors today. Here's hoping both **CKEY** and **Astral** get together again.

* * *

NAMES THAT PASS IN THE NIGHT: Always a welcome visitor to the office is **Bob Yankovich**, director of publicity and advertising for **Paramount Pictures** in Canada. Yankovich chose the day to drop in when I was just putting the finishing touches to this issue, so I don't have the space to pass along all he told me about his company's product lineup for the coming months. But it will be in next week's issue . . . When **Ron Emilio**, Canadian general manager of **MGM**, said he was going to make his current sales drive the biggest success he possibly could, he wasn't kidding. He booked 13 of his company's pictures to play at **20th Century** theatres in one week. The two that caught my eye were **Three Little Words** and **Words and Music**, two of my all-time favorite **MGM** musicals . . . If memory serves me correctly, **Inger Stevens** almost made it to last year's Canadian Motion Picture Industry Convention and Trade Show. But at the last minute, the actress who died suddenly last week, had to turn down the invitation extended to her because of a television commitment. Her death climaxed one of the show business world's most tragic weeks on record, with the passing away also of **Gypsy Rose Lee**, **Anita Louise**, **Ed Begley**, **Arthur Shields** (brother of **Barry Fitzgerald**) and **Cathy O'Donnell**.

MGM-EMI to jointly handle UK studio and distribution

James T. Aubrey, Jr., president and chief executive officer of **MGM**, and John Read, chief executive of **EMI**, have announced an overall association which will result in the formation of two new jointly operated companies — one for film studio operations and the other for film distribution in the United Kingdom. The talks between the two companies arose after **MGM** had decided to close its Borehamwood Studios because a study by that company showed that the operation of a studio in England was no longer economically viable.

Therefore, **MGM** will close its facilities at Borehamwood immediately and take advantage of the studio facility at Elstree. Accordingly, all trade union representatives and employees were notified. The new studio will be called **EMI-MGM Elstree Studios, Ltd.**, and will be managed by **EMI**. Its managing director and chief executive will be **Bryan Forbes**. Other members of the board will be **Bernard Delfont**, chairman; **James T. Aubrey, Jr.**, deputy chairman; **John Read** and **Humphrey Tilling** representing **EMI**, and **Douglas Netter**, **Herbert Solow** and **Oscar Beuselinck** representing **MGM**.

EMI's present film production program at Elstree — together with the separate production schedule controlled by **Nat Cohen**, chairman and chief executive of **Anglo-EMI Film Distributors Ltd.** — will continue. **MGM**'s previously announced production program to be guided by **Robert Littman** will also continue as originally planned.

The new company will operate under a seven year agreement to mid 1977 whereby both **MGM** and **EMI** will seek to concentrate at Elstree all their UK production during the term of this agreement — and in addition, to bring to the studios all post production work on films financed by the two companies but made outside the UK. **EMI-MGM Elstree Studios, Ltd.** and its film making facilities will continue to remain available to independent film and TV production companies. In addition, **EMI-MGM** plan to co-produce 6 to 8 films a year in the UK which will be distributed by **MGM** overseas.

Discussions have taken place regarding new distribution arrangements for the UK market. As a result, a new company will be formed by **MGM** and **EMI**. It will be called **MGM-EMI Film Distributors Ltd.**, and will be managed by **MGM**. Its managing director and chief executive will be **Michael Havas**, presently managing director of **MGM** distribution in the UK.

The chairman of the new distribution company will be **Douglas Netter** of **MGM** and the deputy chairman **Bernard Delfont** of **EMI**. Other members of the board will be **James T. Aubrey, Jr.** and **Oscar Beuselinck** for **MGM**; and **John Read**, and two further directors to be nominated by **EMI**. The company will also operate under a seven year agreement to mid 1977.

At present, **EMI**'s film products are distributed in the UK by **Warner-Pathe Film Distributors, Ltd.**, but this arrangement will be terminated consequent upon the setting up of **MGM-EMI Film Distributors, Ltd.** **Aubrey** stated: "We are extremely happy to be associated with **EMI** because of its prominence in the entertainment industry. The arrangement pleases us because it enables us to remain in studio operations more efficiently and economically, at the same time strengthening the distribution of our product in the United Kingdom. The linking of two such experienced and strong organizations can only enable us to prosper in the years to come."

Commenting on the formation of **EMI-MGM Elstree Studios, Ltd.**, and other joint operations plans, **John Read**, chief executive of **EMI**, said: "These developments have the merit in the first instance of providing greater stability for film production in this country. Elstree Studios should now enjoy a substantially greater loading of its facilities than might otherwise be the case."

"We have every confidence in our own film making program — announced last year by **Mr. Delfont**, chairman and chief executive of **Associated British Picture Corporation, Ltd.** — and the combined programs of **MGM-EMI** and the independent producers should now provide total viability in the future. On the distribution side the new arrangement with **MGM** and ourselves will result in an impressive pooling of technical and financial resources. **EMI** would like to take this opportunity of acknowledging **Warners'** understanding and thank them for their co-operation."

"This closer association of acknowledged world leaders in the entertainment industry should in fact bring a strong measure of reassurance — and indeed greater prosperity — to the film industry in this country. It will undoubtedly make the investment in our own **EMI** activities even more secure."



GALA NIGHT — More than 3,000 people filled Toronto's Imperial Theatre the night of April 20 for a silent film revival of Mary Pickford's "Pollyanna", marking an official observance of Famous Players' 50th anniversary. Tie-in was the fact that "Pollyanna" played Famous' flagship theatre, the Regent (in Toronto), when the company was incorporated in 1920. Top two photos upper left: Buddy Rogers, husband of Mary Pickford and guest of honor at the special showing, arrives at the theatre in a vintage car and has a large crowd of young and old admirers waiting for him. Middle left, a lobby display showing scenes from "Pollyanna" and promotional copy for the added features — organ music by Horace Lapp and a special showing of pen and ink portraits of silent film stars by the outstanding Canadian artist, Harold Town. Two photos bottom left: Buddy Rogers presents

cheques from Famous Players and from himself and wife, totalling more than \$9,000, to Pauline Ashmeade representing the Canadian Arthritis and Rheumatism Society, in whose behalf the "Pollyanna" showing was held; Rogers also goes backstage to cut a Famous anniversary cake during a post-presentation party. While in Toronto, Rogers worked a full day to help promote the benefit event, including radio interviews (one with CFRB's Betty Kennedy, top right) and TV talk shows (middle right with Elwood Glover on CBC's Luncheon Date). Bottom right shows Rogers at the backstage party flanked by (l. to r.) Jim Cameron, who helped organize the event for Famous; Horace Lapp, who had played organ in the Imperial in 1920 when it was the Pantages; Phil Traynor, manager of the Imperial, and, on the extreme right, Les Mitchell, Famous Players district manager.

— Photos by Len Bishop.

Elizabeth Hartman, whose first motion picture in 1965 won her an Academy Award nomination for best actress, has been signed to join **Clint Eastwood** and **Geraldine Page** in **Universal's Beguiled**, Civil War drama of the south now filming on location in Baton Rouge, La. **Don Siegel** is directing.

Warren Beatty and **Julie Christie** will star in **The Presbyterian Church Wager**, a Robert Altman-David Foster production for **Warner Bros.**

Set in the western town of Presbyterian Church in the 1890s, it is the story of a small-time gambler, his love affair with the madam of a brothel and his battle to save the town from being taken over by the Eastern mining establishment.

Filming is scheduled to begin in mid-October.

H. Fleet, Robber is announced by **Universal** as the new title for the western drama filmed under the working title of **Hark**.

George Peppard, **Diana Mul-**

daur, **John Vernon** and **France Nuyen** star in the feature produced by **Robert Arthur**. **Andrew V. McLaglen** directed from **Dick Nelson's** screenplay.

* * *

Pieces of Dreams has been set as the new title for **The Wine and the Music**. **Robert Blumofe** produced and **Daniel Haller** directed the film for release by **United Artists**.

Robert Forster and **Lauren Hutton** star in the story of a priest who falls in love.

Looking Ahead

For all the

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of

**WHAT'S HAPPENING IN
THE MOTION PICTURE INDUSTRY**

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